

A
S E R M O N

Preached before the

Lord Mayor,
ALDERMEN,

AND

Citizens of London.

At *BOW-CHURCH* on the
29th of *May* 1682.

By *BENJAMIN CALAMY*, D. D.
One of his Majesties Chaplains in Ordinary.

The Second Edition.

L O N D O N,

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TO THE
Right Honourable
Sir JOHN MOORE,
Lord Mayor
OF
LONDON,
And to the
COURT
OF
ALDERMEN.

Right Honourable,

T *Here is nothing in the follow-
ing Sermon, that could recom-
mend it to your Lordships favour-
able*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

able Acceptance, besides its plainness and the honesty of its design: nor could any other Consideration have prevailed with me to expose it to the View and Censure of this peevish Age, but only fear of seeming to contradict the Doctrine I taught, Of strict Obedience to the Command of Superiours.

Right Honourable,

Your most humble and

Obedient Servant,

BENJAMIN CALAMY.

A S E R M O N

Preach'd May 29. 1682.

ON

St JOHN 5. 14.

Afterwards Jesus findeth him in the Temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

WHat this Person, to whom our Saviour gave this good Counsel in my Text, was doing in the Temple, is not very hard to determine. It was surely the most proper place for him to be found in, having been lately blest'd with such a miraculous deliverance from an infirmity he had thirty eight Years laboured under, and after so long waiting, and many unsuccessful attempts of getting into the Pool, e'en now despaired of ever being freed from it; till at the powerful command of the Son of

of

A Sermon Preached

of God, the impotent man received new strength and vigour, took up his Bed, and hastned to the House of God, there to offer up, as may well be guess'd, his Sacrifice of praise for such a surprising mercy.

How much more becoming and Pious then is this our Solemn Anniversary Appearance on this Day, in this place, to pay the Tribute of our devoutest Acknowledgments, and most hearty Thanksgivings for a deliverance, as great and stupendous, as ever Gods mighty Hand and outstretched Arm hath wrought for any People, or Nation under the Heavens: Which, if we either consider the Extremity we were reduced unto, or the greatness of the Miseries we were redeemed from, or the Means by which so prodigious a Work was atchieved, or those manifold and excellent Benefits that have since accrued to us from it, hath the Characters of the divine goodness and power so visibly impress'd upon it, is so illustrious an instance, such an astonishing effect of Gods wise and gracious Providence over, and care of this Church and Kingdom, as no Age can parallel, no History can shew the like.

Our Nation had long lain languishing under miserable Oppression and Tyranny, its blood and spirits exhausted in an unnatural Civil War, ending in the Execrable Murder of the late King and Martyr of ever Blessed Memory; in the banishment of his present Majesty and all the Royal Family; in the Subversion of our ancient Monarchy, and enslaving this Land to the wills and lusts of the basest and meanest of the People: Our Church

Church so famous for its Primitive Purity, excellent Government, wholesome Discipline, and decent Order laid in the Dust; monstrous Errors and Heresies every where abounding, wild Enthusiasm and blind Zeal justling out all sober Religion: This was our sad and piteous State; when after many defeats and vain endeavours of the Loyal Party to rescue their Native Country from such lawless Usurpation and horrible distractions; when we were at the lowest ebb, just ready to fall into utter Confusion; then *ὁ θεὸς ἀνέμειξεν*, God appeared in the Mount, insatiating the Counsels, strangely scattering the mighty and victorious Forces of our Enemies, and by a wonderful train of Providences, without War or Bloodshed, to the amazement of the whole World, restored our most gracious Sovereign, the Light of our Eyes, the breath of our Nostrils, to his Rights and Kingdoms, and placed him on the Imperial Throne of his Fathers; (may his Reign be Long and Prosperous) and with him our equal Laws and just Liberties, the glory of the English Subject; and which ought to be especially mentioned in this place, the true reformed Religion with its supports and encouragements, our Church re-established in its former Beauty and Authority, and all these inestimable Blessings with great Peace and Plenty continued to us, now these two and twenty Years. This surely was the Lords doing, and it is marvellous in our Eyes. This is a day the Lord hath made and ought to be had in Everlasting Remembrance.

The divine Providence is indeed extended to

the minutest things, takes care of Sparrows, and numbers the very hairs of our Heads; but yet it is more especially and particularly engag'd in ordering and managing publick affairs, such as are of great moment and benefit to Mankind, in the over-ruling or raising up of Empires, in grand revolutions of State, in alterations of Government, in the protection of the sacred Persons of Sovereign Princes, the chief Ministers of his Kingdom, his Vicegerents and Substitutes here on Earth, on whose welfare whole Nations depend: And God Almighty seems on purpose so to have contriv'd and accomplish'd the deliverance of this day, as that himself might have the sole glory and praise of it. He would not admit any Rival or sharer in the honour of this Renowned Work. It was effected neither by humane force nor wisdom. It had all along much of Miracle in it; the Nation contributing little else towards its own Salvation, besides the united wishes and Prayers of all good men.

I am sure I speak now the sense we all had of this mercy, when it was first vouchsaf'd to us; and shall we ever forget the triumphant shouts and joyful Acclamations, with which his Majesty was welcomed into this City, (shall I say?) or rather into the open Hearts and Breasts of all his Subjects? even those that were obnoxious to his Justice, yet rejoycing and confiding in what they had heard of the goodness and clemency of his nature. Now after such experience of his admirable mercifulness and God-like disposition to forgive, (and perhaps never any one Man in the World

World had opportunity of shewing greater) after so long continuance of those manifold Blessings, which attended his glorious Restauration; let us not suffer our thankfulness in the least to cool and abate, or those impressions of Love and Loyalty, which the first sight of his Royal Person (who was the desire of three Kingdoms) had stamped upon us, to be in any measure worn out and defaced.

Indeed so regardless are some men of Gods Providence over this Nation, and so forgetful of his great mercies, that they do not care to come nigh any place or persons that do devoutly and solemnly own them, All the Liberty and Peace, all the Wealth and excellent Religion which they enjoy, do not possess and affect them comparably to the Fears and Jealousies of the loss of them all. They are so willing and studious to put out of their minds all former deliverances, that they talk, think of nothing but approaching Miseries and Confusions, and by this means go the likeliest way to bring those Calamities upon us. But though I thus speak. yet there is great cause to think better things of you here present, who are now Assembled to bless God, not only for restoring to us our Lawful Prince, but also for giving us such a Gracious King to Reign over us.

Wee have indeed a Country that is admirably fitted for Pleasure, Profit and every thing that is desireable: and we have a Prince, that answers to all the Gentleness, Mildness and Temper of our Climate. I know very well, people are much inclin'd to run backward to famous men, and great Princes

Princes of Former Ages, highly extolling those that have been long since dead and gone; when they have a mind to disparage or undervalue those that are our present Governours. But, if men would make a more just and impartial Comparison, let them look now into the World, and see how other Nations are govern'd, and by whom; let them well consider their Condition and Circumstances abroad, and ours under our Prince, and try with themselves, whether they would be willing to remove into another Country for the sake of a more easie and favourable Government; besides other great advantages, both temporal and spiritual, we have so long enjoyed under the benign influences of his happy Reign, and will, we hope, be continued to us and our Children after us, unless by greater and new Provocations, or impenitent perseverance in old, we run our selves into a worse, and if it be possible, a more deplorable condition, than we were this day delivered from.

Thus behold, by the miraculous deliverance of this day we are made whole: I beg your Patience; while I briefly apply the Exhortation in my Text to this solemn occasion: *Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee*; where be pleased to observe these few plain things.

I. That Sin is generally the cause of temporal evils, which holds true especially as to Nations and whole Societies, and Bodies Politick.

God often afflicts particular persons for their tryal, for the encrease and exercise of their Vertues, to propound their example to the World,

out

out of Love and Fatherly affection to them: and sometimes notorious wicked men escape punishment in this State, because the day of Judgment and recompence is to come hereafter; but it is otherwise as to Communities of men, or the inflicting of publick National Judgments. Here God exerciseth a peculiar Providence over Kingdoms and Nations in this Life. He useth other measures, than he doth in assigning the good or evil things of this World to private persons. In his Providences to single persons he doth not always consider their merit; but when a Land is laid waste by a cruel War, when a potent State is overthrown, when Rebellion is prosperous, when a flourishing People is given up to Slavery or Captivity, we may then truly say, Behold the destruction and desolation that sin hath made.

The reason of which difference commonly given is this; that this Life is the only time of punishing, or rewarding such Societies and Combinations of Men. All such civil relations to one another cease in the other World. Every one shall then answer and account for himself only; and so in this life alone can Nations or Kingdoms, as such, be either punished or rewarded. We ought therefore to give to God the glory of his Justice, and acknowledge that they were the sins of the Nation, that gave success and victory to our Enemies; which, notwithstanding the undoubted goodness of the late Kings Cause, the undaunted Valour of his Friends, his own personal Innocence and exemplary Vertue, yet betray'd him at last into
their

their merciles hands, which so long kept our present Sovereign from his rightful Possessions, and subjected the People to that very Arbitrary Dominion, and Power of the Sword, the prevention of which was the specious pretence of their first taking up Arms.

I shall not fully or eclipse the Glory and Joy of this day by enquiring into the particular Sins, that brought the late Confusions upon us, but only say thus much, That though his Majesty hath graciously Pardoned them, as far as concerns his Courts of Justice, nay hath commanded us not so much as to mention them to the disgrace, or damage of any persons guilty therein; yet surely it is lawful, nay very expedient sometimes to call them to mind, yea often to remember them, in order to the avoiding the like occasions or practices for the future, which once proved so fatal to us: That we should never more give way to such murmurings and discontents, such fears and vain surmises, such Divisions and Factions, as then kindled those Flames, which laid both Church and State in Ashes, till their happy Resurrection on this day.

2. Observe further, that though publick National Judgments be always thus inflicted according to the measure and proportion of our sins, yet the removal of these doth not always signify that the Nation is reform'd, and made better, or that God is reconciled with us, and hath received us again into his favour. For the true cause may be only this, that God would now use other methods; would try other remedies; he alters his dispensa-
tion

tion and prescription; finding the inefficacy of Judgments to awaken and amend us; that we hardened our selves the more under the strokes of his Vengeance, he now designs to melt and dissolve us with an amazing kindness. So that the Miseries and Calamities of the late Times, and the Deliverance of this day, do both teach us the same Lesson, preach the same Doctrine, *That we should sin no more.*

After this manner God hath been pleased in this Age most signally to deal with this Kingdom, by an intermixture of Judgments and Mercies, that either by fair and gentle means, or by harsher and more severe usage we may be prevail'd upon, and engaged to our duty.

Pardon me if I say that God Almighty seems to have a great inclination to save this Nation, and make us happy, if so be we would but yield to be such our selves. He hath not done so to other People; nay, what could he have done more to oblige and reclaim us; than what hath in the compass of a few Years been done? He hath visited us with Rods, and with Scorpions, a long Civil War, a devouring Plague, and a Consuming Fire, and the like: and hath not he shewed us greater mercies? that which we this day commemorate, the preservation of the Kings Life to this time, the late Discovery and prevention of the Popish Plot, the maintaining us hitherto in Peace and Tranquillity, notwithstanding our present distractions and dangerous Convulsions. And therefore

3. If after all these various trials and means used by

by God; we still go on in our Sins; this mightily aggravates the guilt, heightens the provocation, and will certainly encrease our punishment. For

I. We now sin after long and sad experience of the evil and miserable effects of it. When we have soundly smarted for our faults, presently after a severe correction to commit the same, or the like again; this argues an incurable temper, or at least calls for the sharpest punishments to break such obstinacy and stubbornness. One would surely think there needed no other Argument amongst us against Rebellion or Sedition in the State, against Schism or Division in the Church, than the bare remembrance of what this Nation hath already suffered by them; especially this should suffice in this present Age, when the memory of it is fresh, and the Scars still remain. Ye have felt pretty well to your cost, what it is to want Government, what it is by Violence to oppose just Authority; Ye have your selves seen the horrid Consequences of Republican Principles, unbridled Liberty, popular Reformation, and universal Toleration. Should we now ever fall into the same sins again; nourish and foment the like discontents and misunderstandings between the King and his People, take upon our selves in any case to resist the Sovereign Power; we grossly offend against light and knowledge, and fair warning given us, and late experience already had of the evil of such doings. This is to brave God, and to Challenge him to do his worst, when men will dare again to venture on any of those courses, which

which but lately were so mischievous and deadly to these three Kingdoms. ^{so that now we have} As thus to sin after we have been so sorely punished for it, heightens the offence; so to sin after such mercies received includes the guilt of ingratitude, of all Vices the most heinous and provoking: and we doubt very ill require the Lord, may we highly displease him, if the sense of his goodness this day manifested to us, doth not render us, as more obedient to himself, so also more dutiful to our Earthly Sovereign. For this glorious Restauration doth lay an Eternal Obligation upon us all, of continuing true and faithful to the Government in all Points, and at all times; unless we will chuse to provoke God by our monstrous unthankfulness to find out new instruments of Vengeance, and make experiment of what yet greater severities may avail for our amendment: *Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.*

But some will be ready to say, What worse thing can happen to us? Can we imagine a more wretched and Calamitous state of Affairs, greater Confusions, Disorders, and Dangers, than what we this day were delivered from?

Though indeed it is not easily conceived what can be worse than what hath already befallen this Nation, yet we must not think that God wants new methods of punishing and humbling us: His Vengeance is not yet quite exhausted. He hath still in reserve the dregs of the Cup of his Wrath. One King was basely Murdered; and yet through the mercy of God we have seen the lawful Heir Restored, and our selves redeemed from the Tyranny

He will then take unto him his own and spirit in respect his
himself, and enter in and dwell there; and the latter
head of that Nation shall be my faith the beginning.

Give me leave therefore with that freedom and
plainness as becomes the place I now standing, and
the service I am now called to, to recommend to
you some few things, which the deliverance we
this day commemorate doth more especially ob-
lige us all unto, by which we may best contribute
towards the continuance of those great mercies
we now bless God for and prevent our falling
into the same or greater mischiefs than those we
not long ago laboured under.

The first I shall mention is this, and I mention
to it. Quiet and peaceable subjection to the Go-
vernment on this day restored and reestablished,
and that sob Conscience take out of fear of of-
fending God, and avoid them of seven
I know the very meaning of this will of-
fend some men, who had not endure to their
this Doctrine out of the Pulpit. Such have
bid us Preach of Jesus Christ and him crucified, and
not to meddle with State Affairs, or matters of
Government. By this test they tell you, you shall
know those amongst us, that have a mind to be
soonest preferred, or who are Friends to Arbitrary
Power, or strive to please the Court, by Preach-
ing up such strict Obedience to the King; that we
Ministers of Christ ought to be silent and silent,
and not concern our selves in any publick Tran-
sactions. This is the common objection and cla-
mour against Clergymen this day.

But truly I think this very excusable in them,
I say so.

if, not highly commendable, were there no better reason for it than this; That by this frequent and earnest perswading people to exact submission and constant adherence to the present Government, they make some amends for that great mischief that was done out of Pulpits in the late Times, by contrary talk and insinuations.

But why, I pray, must we be the only men, whose Mouths must at such a time as this be stopped? Let those, who are least guilty in this kind, throw the first stone at us. For who is there amongst these wise men, that are so apt to be displeased at Divines meddling with matters of Government, but himself takes the free liberty on all occasions to censure and censure all matters of State, passing his shrewd Judgment, and descanting on every thing that is done or ordered, though never so much above his Capacity; Correcting the Errors of the King and his Council, of which he is by no means a Competent Judge; having his head full of new projects and models of Reformation and Mountebank Receipts, and Infallible Medicines to Cure and settle the Nation, which he vents in all places and Companies with his notable remarks upon all Occurrences, though all this while he be a person never so meanly bred, or little vers'd in humane affairs. Indeed this is the *Epidemical Disease of the times*, and the Clergy ought not to be too severely reprehended, if they have not wholly escaped the general Contagion.

But in truth, the ground of all this Charge and Accusation is only this, That the present Clergy of England take all occasions of shewing their own Loyalty.

Loyalty, and of encouraging the People to the like. They teach their Hearers to be obedient, and perswade them to Peace and Submission, and this they had need speak often, and loudly too in such turbulent and boisterous times, as we now live in. This is their great fault and crime, and God grant that we may all live under this disgrace, and dy under this Ignominy.

And in doing this, we preach no other Doctrine, but what our Saviour and Master did, than was taught by his Apostles, than was practised by the Primitive Christians, and owned in all the Churches of Christ (never contradicted, but by the Papists, in order to the setting up of the Extravagant Power of the Pope, and by some Sectaries since the Reformation, to make way for the pretended Kingdom of Christ here upon Earth;) but especially maintained and defended in our Church of *England*; viz. That Sovereign Princes are accountable to God alone, That actual Obedience is due to them in all things, honest and lawful; and, That in no Case by force or violence we may resist them.

Nay, we affirm further with equal truth, That we are bound to obey our Lawful Superiours, not only for fear of punishment, not only for convenience, or out of any temporal respect; but also out of sense of duty towards God, who hath enjoined it under pain of Damnation; who hath invested Sovereign Kings and Princes with some of his own divine Power and Authority.

Nay, it is not sufficient that we pay them all external Obedience, or outward Respect; but inward

ward Veneration and Honour is due to them (and that, though themselves be vicious persons, debauched in their Lives, heretical in their Opinions, or Tyrannical in their Government) yet we must pay them such inward Respect and Reverence as is due to their high Calling, and that great Place, and Character, and Image they bear here on Earth.

Nay further yet, we must not so much as speak, or think meanly, slightly or rudely of them: *Curse not the King, no not in thy thought*; much more we ought not upon any account to vilify or disparage their Persons or Government, nor misrepresent or carp at their Proceedings, when they suit not with our present humour or understanding; nor complain of, or saucily inveigh against their Administration; nor do or say any thing that tends to lessen their Reputation, to weaken their Authority, or to bring them into contempt; by which means they become less able to serve those great ends, for which Government was instituted.

We ought not especially to lay all miscarriages or misfortunes of the times at their Door. For though Kings and Princes be but men, and men of the same Passions and Infirmities with other Mortals; yet the inconveniences and troubles that at any time arise in a Kingdom, do not always proceed from the unskilfulness or neglect of the Governours, but in a great part from the perverse and unmanageable temper of the People. In a word, It is not more our duty than our privilege and happiness to Obey. This is our grand Prerogative,

gative, not to be troubled with the Cares, and yet to enjoy the blessed Fruits of Government.

The next thing I would recommend to you is this, That every one of us should first and chiefly mind his own private duty, that belongs to him in that Station Gods Providence hath placed him in here; and to be sure to amend and reform himself, before he goes about to reform others, or the publick. Peace and good order can never be preserved long without this; that every one should keep his own proper rank, and follow his own work and calling, and act his own part assign'd him on this great Theatre of the World; well and to the Life; leaving publick affairs to those who have authority and ability to manage them; things sacred to those who are lawfully called to administer them; all private persons keeping within their own bounds, and doing their own business they are bred to and fitted for.

It is in all Societies as in an Army; wherein, if every inferior Officer diligently minds his own Charge, and every single Souldier keeps his own Place, and stoutly maintains his Ground and Post, and the General over-looks and governs the whole, every one being ready punctually to Execute, not dispute, his Commands; then is good order and discipline maintain'd, and such a Body cannot be easily broken. But when every private Souldier shall neglect his own place and duty to direct his Captains, and every Captain thinks himself wise enough to Lead and Command the whole Army, and is advising his General, and leaving his own Company to instruct his fellow Captains, not satisfied

tified with their Conduct; what can this breed, but sudden tumult and confusion, till they all become a cheap prey to their Enemies? the Application is easy.

It hath indeed never been well with us in this Nation, since this itch of hearing and telling publick News hath so notoriously infected all sorts of men amongst us. In which alone too many in this City scandalously spend so great a part of their Life, to the irreparable loss of their precious time, neglect of their Trades and Religious Duties, and oftentimes to the utter ruine of themselves and Families; who whilst they should be in their Shops, following their secular Professions, are busy in mending of the State, and reforming of publick abuses and grievances, which concern them not; and thus disorder the ranks of men, and ruffle and pervert the due course of things, and as much as in them lies, Dethrone, Depose those whom God hath set over us for that very end, to take care of the publick Peace and Safety.

But alas, Gentlemen, you are too presumptuous and confident above your reach and understandings. Let me tell you, this is impudence and ill manners, were there no other vice or mischief in it, for every conceited Pedant as if he were inspired with Politicks, or pert Tradesman, that can but make a shift to spell out a *Gazette*, to undertake to wield Scepters and rule Kingdoms. You ought not in modesty to pretend to Wit and Capacity enough to comprehend such affairs. Matters of Policy, the Arts and Methods of Government, are things too sacred, and venerable, and august,

to

to be prophand by every unhallow'd hand! They are like the mysteries of Religion, which are not to be prostituted to the Examination, and Disquisition of every capricious Brain, and vulgar Understanding. These are out of the reach of those that hold the Plow, or that drive Oxen, whose talk is of their Bullocks, who give their mind to make Furrows, and are diligent to give the Kine Fodder. These are not to be transacted at the Exchange, nor determined over our Cups, or at our ordinary Entertainment. Not but that every good and honest man is, and ought to be concerned for the preservation of his Prince, Religion and Country; yet always within the limits of his Calling and Station; and when the Winds blow hard, and the Storm is great and violent, no such certain way of Shipwrecking the Vessel, as when every Passenger leaves his private Cabin, and will needs be Pilot.

We all complain of bad times, and evil days, and so indeed they are, and such they will continue notwithstanding our complaints of them. But then we must know, that they are only evil men that make evil dayes; and happy would it be for us, if all those who complain most loudly of these evil dayes, would take sufficient care not to contribute towards the rendring them such. And if instead of vain and affected complaints, which only beat the air, men would in the fear of the Lord take themselves to task, search out what is amiss in themselves, first sweep their own Door, would spend their time and use their Eyes more at home, be more curious and critical in observing
D themselves

themselves than other men, and become more severe against their own faults than they are against the miscarriages of others; the World would soon be much mended, and we should suddenly have far better days. Thou hast thy self in the first place given thee in charge to look after. For that chiefly thou shalt be accountable, and not for publick misfortunes; it behoveth us then to take care, whilst we are so busily employed in reforming others, we our selves do not become Castaways.

Thus private persons in their several stations, inferiour Magistrates according to the Sphere of their Power and Authority, and no further, attending every one conscientiously to his own proper work and business, would go very far towards the maintaining of order and quiet, securing the publick Peace, and making the Government both easy and prosperous.

3. In order to the preventing any evils we fear, or the obtaining or continuing of the greatest good, we must not use any unlawful or indirect means. This is the most pernicious and damnable Doctrine of *Rome*, though not always publickly owned, yet greedily swallow'd amongst them; and proved sufficiently from their unwearied practices; that in order to the propagation of their Faith or Church, any thing, every thing becomes lawful; Killing and Massacring no Murder, Lying and Perjury no sin or injury. That so good and great an end will justify and sanctify all actions. Nay, have not we had instances amongst our selves in this Kingdom of the greatest wickedness, and villanies committed by pretended Protestants, for
Gods

Gods glory and for setting up the Gospel and pure worship of Christ? and indeed well meaning men, but of great passions, are not a little apt to this. When they are secured of the goodness and worthiness of their end, their minds are so intent upon it, and they are so hot and eager in the prosecution of it, that they allow not themselves leisure and patience to consider the lawfulness and expediency of the means they use for the compassing of it.

But blessed be God, we have not so learned Christ. We are not to do the least evil, though the greatest good may come by it. Our Religion teacheth us to suffer the greatest evils, rather than forsake or renounce it; but not to do the least evil, even for the maintenance of it; and it will be our great glory and commendation, nay I may add our interest and safety too, to hold true to this principle, neither to do, nor to consent unto any unwarrantable action, though it be to keep out Popery and Slavery, no, not to save three Kingdoms. And thus doing and suffering we highly manifest our full trust in God, and signally entitle our selves to his Protection.

The story of *Uzzah* is remarkable to this purpose. *David with the chosen men of Israel* was conveying the Ark of the Lord, in a new Cart from the House of *Abinadab*, as you may see *2 Sam. 6.* and *Uzzah* drove the Cart. Now the Oxen chanced to stumble, and the Ark was shaken, so that it seemed ready to fall. It was not lawful for *Uzzah*, (though what the particular reason was, is variously disputed by learned men) to touch the Ark.

Yet out of great zeal and good meaning to prevent a thing so dishonourable to God and their Religion, as the fall of the Ark to the ground would have been, he suddenly put forth his hand, and took hold of it, and he died in the place. God would not suffer so much as a ritual, ceremonial law to be openly broken, though it were to save the Ark, the signal of his divine presence amongst them, from falling. God stood not in need of *Uzzah's* help against his own Law and Command.

The interest of Religion it self is not to be kept up, or carried on by any courses or practices that our Religion condemns. If we trust God and the goodness of our cause, we must be sure to use no means in the defence of it, but such as God doth allow: or can we shew greater diffidence in God, than when we think to serve him by our iniquity and unrighteousness, by our sins to advance his glory, as if God were at a loss in some circumstances to defend his tottering Church and People, unless we help'd him out a little in a time of great need, by stretching our Consciences and venturing on something that he hath forbid? People must not take care of God and his cause against Gods mind.

Whenever therefore by projects of our own invention not approved of by God, we contrive to avoid persecution, or preserve the Protestant Religion, which yet we hope the necessity of the times, and exigency of the present State of Affairs will excuse; when we endeavour after settlement and salvation by any irregular, indirect means, we put

put our selves out of Gods way and protection, renounce his care and providence over us; we declare that we are weary of waiting upon him, are afraid to depend on him, chuse rather to stand upon our own Legs, or, as *Saul* did, when God had forsaken him, run to the *Devil* for help and advice. Nay, this is the most ready way to lose, to betray our Religion, when we attempt to secure it by unlawful means. God and his Church will stand, but when men do overact it, and are over-eager and busy, they labour not so much at Gods cause as their own.

Fourthly, In order to the continuance of these great mercies to us, which we this day bless God for, I know nothing more effectual, than our Conscientious and constant adhering to the Church, as it is now by Law established; a Church reformed with the gravest and maturest deliberation, by the advice and with the consent of the supreme power, according to the word of God, and the example of the best and Primitive Ages; whose Doctrines are so Orthodox, its Liturgy so devout, its Government so Apostolical, its Constitutions so reasonable and useful, its Ceremonies so few and decent, that no one can refuse Communion with it, but upon such principles, which if he holds to them, shall equally oblige him to refuse Communion with all the settled Churches, that are or have been in the Christian World; excepting some few little Commonwealth Churches, but of very late Years first invented, and set up amongst us. A Church most admirably fitted for the making of men substantially good and pious, just and loyal, peace-

peaceable and charitable, that inroacheth not upon the Right of Princes, nor imposeth on the Faith of Christians; that hath most remarkably run the fate of, and stood or fell with the Monarchy; which is the terrour of *Rome* and the Bulwark of the Protestant Cause and Religion. And in all humane probability nothing can keep Popery (of which we now stand in so much fear and danger, which is the great evil that now so sorely threatens us) nothing, I say, can keep it out of *England* so much as being firm and true to this present establishment, till our Governours shall see fit to make any alterations.

And if ever that common Enemy again get entrance here, it must be through those holes and breaches, which our needless Divisions and Separations from the Church have made.

It is said of the old *Britains*, when the *Romans* first Conquered them, *Dum singuli pugnant, universi vincuntur*: Their divided single Troops were presently subdued by the united force of *Cæsars* disciplin'd Legions. And the same way will the Romish Religion, if ever, gain admittance. It will soon surmount and crush all little separated incoherent Congregations which might be resisted, and kept out by a well constituted united National Church.

And therefore I cannot but say here, that none do serve Popery more successfully, though, I believe, they know it not, nor design any such thing themselves, than those, who are with both hands pulling down this present Church of *England*, continually pelting her with peevish exceptions, and

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popular scruples, libelling her Bishops and Governours, and laying all the evils of the times to their Charge, slandering her Ministers, vilifying her divine Offices, slighting her Censures, and deriding her Institutions. The faster and surer this Church is established, the more Interest, Authority and Influence it hath, so much longer will Popish Idolatry be kept out of England.

For all that some ill men are apt to declaim against our Church, as if it were Popishly affected, yet Heaven and Hell, Light and Darkness are not more contrary one to the other, than the Doctrines of Popery and the Religion professed and taught in the Church of England. And I pray God, he be not now by his late Providences teaching all Protestants the difference between Popery and Conformity, and shewing us that the little Finger of Papal Tyranny is heavier than the Loins of the English Episcopacy. If ever such a sad day happen in England, (which God in his infinite mercy prevent) that Popery should be settled by a Law, men will then see, what little reason they had to cry down our present Church as Antichristian, or the Ministers of it as Papists in *Masquerade*, or the publick Prayers as the same with the Mass-Book, or our kneeling at the Holy Sacrament, as the same with the Adoration of the Host. They will then gladly wish for these days again, that they might have but once more the opportunity of serving God in publick, though with all the Ceremonies our Church enjoins. What an Happiness would they account that Liberty which now they are too apt to call Persecution?
thus

thus the unreasonable suspicious and groundless clamours of some men against our Church, as drawing too nigh, and approaching daily nearer to Popery, may soon bring or provoke God justly to inflict that great evil both upon themselves and us.

Now as there are two ways of securing a Town besieged by Enemies, weakning the force of the Enemy without us, and strengthening and better fortifying our own Walls, and encreasing the number of our Souldiers and Defendants: So are there two ways of keeping out Popery, not only discountenancing, executing the penal Laws against all those of the Romish Faction; but also by daily adding to the strength of our own Church by healing her wounds, and making up her Breaches, by restoring due Authority to its Governours, and Reverence to its Ministers, by the coming in of those who have dissented from and deserted her, and for our common safety at least joining with us, sacrificing all petty interests and bones of contention to the publick Peace; and then through Gods blessing, and the goodness of our Governours, we may be able to stand our ground, notwithstanding the unwearied attempts and artifices of Rome against us.

It is the great Policy of the Church of Rome, that whatever differences arise amongst them in matters of opinion, (and they are several, and those managed with a great deal of heat and zeal, notwithstanding their pretence to infallibility) yet they all agree to adhere fast unto, and by all means to promote Holy Church. Whereas our mischief and

and folly is, that every little difference constitutes a new Party, and we divide in interest; and so that we may but pull down those that oppose us, we care not though we let in those that will devour us all.

Machiavel in his Discourses upon *Livy* lays it down for an error in Politicks, by force to invade any City or Kingdom, when there are great Divisions and Seditions amongst the People; this being the most ready way to unite them all against the common danger. Let them but alone, saith he, or help a little to encrease and widen their differences, and they shall ruine and destroy themselves without putting their Enemies to any trouble. And truly we may well account our Dissensions and Divisions incurable; if our late and present fears and dangers be not sufficient to put an end to them. When *Hannibal* is at the Gates, it is no time surely for men to be squabbling and jangling against a Ceremony or a Form of Prayer.

In this all Parties agree, all sides teach and defend, that there is no likely way of preserving our common Religion, but by all Protestants uniting together, for the joint defence of those things they agree in. And yet, notwithstanding all this good talk, are not our Religious feuds and animosities greater, more fierce at this day than ever? Do not our Divisions encrease? Do not our Separatists run further from us, keep at a greater distance, instead of approaching as nigh as they could, or complying with us, as far as in their own Consciences they judged lawful? Are not new terms of distinction, and opprobrious nick-

names Coined and pass current amongst us? Is not Victory and Superiority sought more than Peace and Unity? to give Laws and prescribe to others, rather than amicably to agree, and compose, or silence our difference? These are things that forebode worse to our State and Nation, than Comets or Prodigies. For the Civil Government it self can never be quiet, or secure, as long as there are such endless Divisions and Separations amongst us, and the Civil State will find it self wounded through the sides of the Church.

As we would therefore preserve the Peace of our Country, our excellent Religion, and rid the Nation of these fears of Popery, lest a much worse thing than what we have hitherto felt, come upon us, let us not only our selves continue true and faithful to this Church we were baptized into, and have the happiness to be Members of; but also endeavour by all the ways of Prudence and Love, by all the Arts of Mildness and Gentleness, by all lawful compliances and condescensions, to win over others into its Bosom and Communion.

Fifthly, In order to the engaging of God to the protection of our King, and Church, and Nation, and the continuance of all those mercies we now enjoy above any other People, let us all join our utmost endeavours to put a stop to that Floud of Atheism, Prophaneness and Irreligion, that hath so strangely of late Years prevailed amongst us.

Every Age, God knows, is wicked and sinful enough, and the present doth always appear to be, the

the worst, because we are better acquainted with the evil of that than of any other: yet surely never in any time, since Religion (shall I say?) or Civility first entred into our Country, were men so impudent and barefac'd in sinning, in pleading for it, in defending of it, as in these dayes in which our lot is fallen.

Heretofore men were sensual and debauched, but then they did all they could to conceal their Vices, they sinn'd with Modesty, they would sometimes blush for what they had done, and their Consciences often misgave them. But now men make a mock and sport of sin, they glory and boast of it, they have entertained wicked Principles agreeable to their practices; they not only neglect Religion, but reproach and despise it; not only forget God, but deny him; do all they can to banish him and his Providence out of the World; affront and blaspheme him; burlesque his sacred Writings, exposing to ridicule and scorn all the most serious and holy things or persons.

This drolling, scoffing humour, which spares not God himself, his Providences, Laws and Government, seems to be the peculiar reigning sin of this Age; insomuch that many are e'en afraid of appearing strict or Religious, lest they should expose themselves to the buffoonry, and raillery of such men, who think every thing wit, that is impudent and prophane.

It cannot be denied, but that this open wickedness hath increased much upon us, since the Kings coming in; Atheism hath got strange ground, and made many Profelytes. And that there is an uni-

verbal degeneracy and corruption both of Principles and Manners amongst us, is the observation and complaint of all sober persons.

The chief cause of which is not, as some would persuade us, the Restauration of the King, and Church; but indeed the horrid Hypocrisy, and that great abuse of Religion, which was so notorious in the late times, is one of the greatest causes of the prophaneness and contempt of all Religion in this; when so many made shew of the greatest demerit and tenderness of Conscience imaginable, and yet were not afraid to do the most shameful and dishonourable things. This was apt to make men think, that Religion was nothing else, but a crafty way to abstain from some sins, to give our selves greater liberty in others, to commit them with less suspicion. This hath given occasion to many of loose Lives, to look upon all Religious People as a pack of Hypocritical Pharisees, only some to have better luck than others, in passing off the Stage undiscovered.

And yet all this while there is nothing in the World more unjust and unreasonable than this: True Religion is not to answer for all that the Army-Saints did, who only professed it to serve a turn, who took up the outward garb and dress of it, by it to deceive the simple and unwary, and palliate their leud designs; whose chief godliness lay in making of Faces, turning up their Eyes, in bold extemporary Effusions, and canting in Scripture style, and Proclaiming a Fast before every Murder they committed. What such men did, ought not in the least to prejudice us against unfeigned

feigned Piety, hearty and sober Devotion, true Righteousness, Peaceableness and quietness of Temper, and universal Goodness.

But whatever is the true cause of this growth of Atheism, and Irreligion amongst us, this is certain that the publick Peace and Government is in no little danger from men of such Principles and practices. For when all is done, Conscience is the best tie of Allegiance, and they will always prove the best and quietest Subjects, who are most afraid of offending God. And they, who regard not the Sovereign Majesty of Heaven and Earth, or his Laws, can never give sufficient assurance of Loyalty to their Earthly Prince, or of Obedience to his Commands, any longer than it is their interest so to do. So that we cannot any better way serve the King, and the Government than by promoting amongst all his People the fear of God, and a due sense of Religion.

So serviceable to the true interests of Kings, and the happiness and peace of Societies, is true Religion, that the Atheists have looked upon it and exposed it as a subtle invention of some airy Politicians to keep Subjects in awe and order. So that whether they be true or false, yet by their own Confession the Principles of Religion are very useful to mankind; and if they are not true, yet it is great pity they are not; and Atheism ought to be prosecuted and punished as destructive to publick Peace and order. They are absolute Enemies to the Government that would free mens minds from the dread of invisible Powers; and ought to be avoided as the pests of human Society, who,

who labour to bring Religion into contempt.

And oh that I could now say something, that might be of force to perswade you all, to adorn the King's and Churches Cause, which you have so happily espoused, by innocency of Life, sobriety of Conversation, by a regular Devotion and unaffected Piety, and unbounded Charity; that you would all take care to give unto God as well as to *Cesar* his due.

Let us but all in our several places live better than our Kings or Churches Enemies, and then let me tell you, we will neither fear their Swords, nor their Pens, their Weapons, nor their Arguments. It is the prophaneness and debauchery, the Oaths and intemperance of too many amongst us, that would pretend to be the greatest Lovers of the Crown and Church, that do really most endanger both, that weaken our side, and encourage and harden our Adversaries. Let this be but your task to wipe off this stain, to answer this Objection, to remove this scandal from the Loyal Party; and I say it again, we need not be concerned at what either Papists, or Fanaticks can say or do against us. Oh let not our heinous and crying sins a second time ruine and lose so just and glorious a Cause, destroy so flourishing a Kingdom and Monarchy, overturn the purest and best constituted Church in the World. Let not our selves prove our own greatest Enemies and Betrayers.

It is not, believe me, wild boasting and hectoring, extravagant Swearing and Drinking for the King and the Church; it is not our damning to the

the Pit of Hell either Papists or Fanaticks, that doth us any service, or them any harm.

We could e'en wish all such men from amongst us, but that we still hope, at last they may be brought to a better mind. Though they add to our numbers, yet we lose and sink in our reputation by reason of them, besides that they provoke God against us. We cannot wish worse to the Kings Enemies, than that all such, as hate to be reformed, would go over to their side, and credit their Party. We have already seen by woful experience, how far the mask and disguise of Religion only prevailed and succeeded. What would the effect be, if so good a Cause were maintained and defended only by good men.

Lastly, Let us all add our constant and devout Prayers for the King, for the preservation of his Life, the prosperity of his Affairs, and for a blessing upon his Government. In doing of this we only pray most effectually for our selves; this is a short compendious way of wishing all good and happiness to our selves and Country, earnestly praying for the Kings Life. These words, *Let the King live*, or *God save the King*, comprize in them all the outward publick blessings we can want, we can wish for. Then we pray for the maintenance of our Religion, the defence of our Church, the enjoyment of our just Rights and Liberties. We pray for the common welfare and safety, when we thus zealously recommend our most gracious King to Gods most especial Protection.

This is a way, by which the meanest subject may

may oblige his Prince, benefit his King ; who may truly stand indebted for his Peace and Prosperity, in some measure, to the Prayers of his poorest Vassal. Thus though our Station be never so low and mean, our interest and influence small and narrow, our Authority inconsiderable, yet we may prove great Benefactors to the publick, and do great good to three Kingdoms, by our faithful Intercessions at the Throne of Grace for his most Excellent Majesty,

That God would preserve his Royal Person from all outward Violence, or any inward Diseases; that he would continue his Strength and Health, would keep and guard him from all Dangers, would Cloath all his Enemies with Shame, whilst on his Head his Crown doth flourish; that he would inspire him more and more with Wisdom and Knowledge, to Rule and Govern this great People; that he would direct and bless his Counsels, and prosper all that he takes in Hand; that after a long and happy Reign here, he may late, very late be translated into the Immortal and Invisible Kingdom.

And as we pray to God on his behalf, so ought we most especially this day, to praise God for him and those manifold Blessings, which he hath been the happy Instrument under God, of transmitting down to us.

Blessed be the Day wherein he was born, and the Night when it was said, there is a Manchild conceived.

Blessed be God, that saved him from those Bloody Hands, that so cruelly used his Blessed Father,

Father, that covered his Head in the Day of Battel, that conveyed him safe through Crowds of his Enemies, when his precious Life was put to sale; and after innumerable Dangers, by a miraculous Escape, landed him safe on a Foreign Shore.

Blessed be God, that preserved him all along during a tedious Exile, that provided for him in the Wilderness, that kept him constant to that Religion and Church which his Royal Father died in, notwithstanding great offers and temptations to change it.

Blessed be God, that upon this day brought him back again to his desolate People, and hath hitherto continued him a publick Blessing to this Nation.

Blessed be God, that hath given the King the Hearts and Affections of all his People.

God be praised for his merciful Disposition, for the unparallel'd sweetness and benignity of his Temper, for the Mildness and Equity of his Government, his Love to the Church, his Constancy to the Protestant Interest, his Fatherly Care of his People.

For all which, and all other Blessings, let there be ascribed by us and all men, to God Almighty, the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost, all possible Praise, Thanksgiving, Adoration and Obedience, for evermore, *Amen.*

F I N I S.

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